

On page 2, line 19, please delete the word *truck* and insert the word *compartment* as provided for in the following replacement paragraph:

There is a need, therefore, for a simple, economical means to create a covered storage compartment in a truck bed. The means should be fully integrated and not require the user to carry unnecessary pieces or use valuable storage space when the compartment is not needed.

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On page 2, lines 7-8, the examiner suggested that the description was awkward. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

The instant invention is a truck bed liner having an integrated trunk storage compartmentalization system. According to the invention, a truck bed liner of the general type having two side walls, a front wall, a bottom, and a rear wall is used. The bottom of the truck bed liner is co-formed to the front of the truck bed liner. The liner bottom is also co-formed to the liner side walls. At a predetermined location in the liner bottom is found at least one divider panel. Divider panels are formed either by molding or cutting slots into the liner bottom creating a three-sided flap having a generally square or rectangular appearance. The fourth side is molded or cut into a living hinge. The living hinge allows the unattached portion of the truck bed liner bottom to move freely about the living hinge. The side walls of the truck bed liner include receiving channels into which the divider panels are locked into place.

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On page 2, lines 18 and 20 the examiner suggested that the description was awkward. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

In operation, an operator can position the divider panel to a 90 degree position with respect to the bottom and lock it into the receiving channels found on the side walls. The enclosure panel is then rotated 90 degrees with respect to the tail gate when in a closed position such that the enclosure panel may be inserted into the closure channel to form, in conjunction with the divider panel, a trunk storage compartmentalization. When the enclosed trunk storage compartmentalization is no longer needed, the enclosure and divider panels can be detached from the side wall channels and returned and locked into the original, flat horizontal position.

On page 4, line 8, the examiner suggested that the word *the* should be inserted. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

In another embodiment, the divider is located in the bottom of the bed liner perpendicular to the front wall and the enclosure panel is located in the side wall of the bed liner.

On page 4, line 13, the examiner suggested that the spelling of Side wall should be changed. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

In another embodiment, a single section of the liner bottom having two living hinges is used, thereby, enabling the formation of a trunk storage compartment with the side wall by

creating a vertical wall with one of the living hinges and a horizontal cover with the second living hinge.

The examiner suggested that *Truck Bed Liner* should not be capitalized in the application. Please insert the following replacement paragraphs throughout the application:

Page 1, line 7:

This invention relates to truck bed liners and, more particularly, to a truck bed liner having a storage compartment within the truck bed.

Page 5, starting at line 2; also the examiner suggested that on line 5 changing *having* to *have*, that the sentence starting on line 4 was awkward, line 9 *degree* should be inserted, and on line 11, *Side wall* should be *side wall*:

It is a primary object of the present invention to create a truck bed liner that has an integrated trunk storage compartmentalization feature. The truck bed liner has generally a front wall, two side walls, a bottom, and a back wall. A divider panel and an enclosure panel are each molded or cut into the truck bed liner such that the divider panel and enclosure panel can be secured to the side walls and, thereby, in combination, form a trunk storage compartment. It is another object of the present invention to create a truck bed liner that has a locking means to hold the divider panel in place when positioned at 90 degrees from the horizontal. It is still another object of the present invention to create a truck bed liner that has a side wall with a closure channel to releasably retain the enclosure panel to secure and enclose the storage of items within a trunk storage compartment. It is still another object of the present invention to provide a truck bed liner in which the trunk storage compartment is easy to assemble and disassemble. A related object of the present invention is to provide a trunk storage compartment that is formed from an integrated unit within the truck bed liner.

Page 6, line 1:

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a truck bed liner with an integrated trunk storage compartmentalization feature which is economical to manufacture and produce..

Page 6, line 11:

**Figure 2** depicts the divider panel locked into position at 90 from horizontal and the enclosure panel rotated to 90 from horizontal prior to forming the trunk storage compartmentalization within the truck bed liner.

Page 7, line 7:

**Figure 9** depicts an alternate embodiment of the inventive device in its assembled configuration illustrated as located in the forward section of the truck bed liner.

Page 7, line 12:

**Figure 11** depicts a top view of the alternate embodiment in which the liner bottom is used in conjunction with multiple living hinges to form the trunk storage compartment in the forward section of the truck bed liner.

Page 9, line 2:

*QFB*  
The description of the preferred embodiment is directed to pickup truck bed liners. It should be understood, however, that the principles of the inventive device can just as easily be adapted to liners for use in sport utility vehicles, station wagons, passenger motor vehicle trunks, and the like. It also should be understood that the principles of the inventive device can just as easily be adapted for use directly in truck beds made of composite materials, thereby eliminating the need for a liner.

*QFB*  
Page 17, line 6:

*QFB*  
The principles of the inventive device and the alternate embodiments disclosed above are directed to application with a truck bed liner having a front, back, side walls, and bottom. The principles and alternate embodiments may also be applied to liners possessing only partial bed liner characteristics. For example, a liner comprising only a bed mat to protect the bottom of a bed may be fitted with an integrated divider panel and a separate or co-joined member that enables formation of a cover member in the formation of an enclosure panel.

On page 13, lines 2-3, the examiner noted that the word *horizontal* was used when *vertical* would be more appropriate. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

*QFB*  
In operation, to create the truck storage compartmentalization, divider panel 56 is rotated from the horizontal position to an essentially vertical position and locked into vertical divider lock means 58, as discussed above in Figure 3. Enclosure panel 70 is removed from base panel 72 by applying sufficient pressure on enclosure panel 70 in a direction away from base panel 72 to release enclosure panel 70 from base panel 72. Upon release, enclosure panel 70 rotates away from base panel 72 along living hinge 74. Base panel 72 is then rotated from the vertical position to an essentially horizontal position through lifting and closing of tail gate 30. During the lifting and closing of tail gate 30 to a closed vertical position, enclosure panel 70 is received into closure means 75 by sliding edge 80 of enclosure panel 72 being inserted between horizontal protrusions 76 into closure channel 78. Upon tail gate 30 reaching the closed vertical position, enclosure panel 72 is completely inserted into closure channel 78 such that sliding edge 80 is essentially flush with divider panel 56 and enclosure panel 70 is approximately perpendicular to divider panel 56.

On page 13, lines 11-12, the examiner noted that *base channel* should be *base panel*. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

The resulting trunk storage compartment is illustrated in Figure 8 in which the items within the compartment are prevented from unrestricted movement by divider panel 56 and base panel 72 co-acting as the sides of the compartment and enclosure panel 70 acting as the top of the compartment to protect the items from inclement weather, such as rain. The same inventive concept may be used to form the trunk storage compartment in the forward section of liner 20 as illustrated in Figure 9.

On page 14, lines 3-4, the examiner noted that *at the opposite end of liner bottom 40* was unclear and that a figure element was incorrectly numbered. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

Turning to Figure 10, it is contemplated that liner front wall 34 and the liner bottom 40 may be used to create a trunk storage compartmentalization within the truck bed liner 20. Liner bottom 40 is provided with divider panel 56 at a predetermined location from liner front wall 34 at living hinge 52. Divider panel 56 extends from liner front wall 34 to living hinge 52. Liner side walls 36, 38 are correspondingly provided with divider vertical lock means 58. Liner front wall 34 is provided with a front wall enclosure panel 84. Liner front wall 34 is molded or cut so as to not co-form on its three sides to liner bottom 40 or liner side walls 36, 38; but instead, is provided, on its fourth side, with a living hinge 82 attached to the liner 20. Divider panel 56 may be rotated, along living hinge 52, in a direction through rotation A to a 90 with respect to the horizontal and liner bottom 40 and locked in a vertical position to liner side walls 36, 38 by divider vertical lock means 58. Front wall enclosure panel 84 may be rotated in a direction through rotation B, along the living hinge 82, from a vertical position to a horizontal position and secured to a front wall latch means 85 protruding from liner side walls 36, 38 adjacent to divider vertical lock means 58. Alternatively, front wall enclosure panel 84 and divider panel 56 may be secured using a single latch means. In this manner, liner front wall 34 acts as the enclosure panel and divider panel 56 and liner 20 coact as the sides to form the trunk storage compartment. Preferably, front wall enclosure panel 84 is approximately equal in length to divider panel 56. Alternatively, the length of front wall enclosure panel 84 and position of living hinge 82 may be greater or smaller, if desired, as long as the length of divider panel 56 and position of living hinge 52 are correspondingly made greater or smaller.

On page 15, the examiner noted in lines 10 and 12 that the word *degree* was missing. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

Turning to Figure 12, to form the trunk storage compartment, enclosure panel 92 of liner bottom 40 is raised to a 90 position with respect to the horizontal. Enclosure panel 92 is situated at an angle 94 with respect to divider panel 56. Angle 94 is approximately 45 degree with respect to divider panel 56. The rotation of enclosure panel 92 about divider panel 56 is accomplished by

second living hinge 88. Divider panel 56 is correspondingly raised to a 45 degree position with respect to the horizontal which is accomplished by first living hinge 86. Front wall 34 is affixed with a latch means 96. The formation of the trunk storage compartment is completed, as illustrated in Figure 13, by rotating divider panel 56, along living hinge 86, to a 90 position with respect to the horizontal and liner bottom 40.

The examiner noted that there was an inconsistency between Figures 14 and 15. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

Alternatively, in another embodiment as illustrated in Figure 15, the trunk storage compartment is formed in conjunction with liner Side wall 36 or liner Side wall 38. This alternate embodiment may be accomplished, as illustrated in Figure 16, through liner bottom 40 having living hinges 86 and 88 to create divider panel 56 and enclosure panel 92. Divider panel 56 and enclosure panel 92 may be rotated, as illustrated in Figure 16, along living hinges 86 and 88 and secured by latch means 96 to form the trunk storage compartment with liner Side wall 36 or liner Side wall 38.

On page 18, line 5, the examiner noted a typographical error. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

Thus, there has been provided a truck bed liner with integrated panels to create a trunk storage compartment within a truck bed liner. While the invention has been described in conjunction with a specific embodiment, it is evident that many alternatives, modifications and variations will be apparent to those skilled in the art in light of the foregoing description. Accordingly, it [in] is intended to embrace all such alternatives, modifications and variations as fall within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

### Claims

The claims are amended as follows:

10. The storage compartment of Claim 2 wherein the divider panel securing means comprises at least two protrusions extending outwardly from each of a first side wall and a second side wall of the bed liner at a predetermined point in the first and second side walls such that the at least two protrusions maintain the divider panel in a 90 degree angle with respect to the bottom when the divider panel is in a vertical position, the protrusions being spaced apart from one another along the horizontal axis such that the divider panel can be positioned between them.

11. The liner of Claim 3 wherein the enclosure panel securing means comprises at least two horizontal protrusions extending outwardly from each of a first side wall and a second side wall of the bed liner at a predetermined point in the first and second side walls, the horizontal protrusions being spaced apart from one another to form a closure channel to receive and secure the enclosure panel between the horizontal protrusions.



24. The storage compartment of Claim 16 wherein the divider panel securing means comprises at least two protrusions extending outwardly from each of a first side wall and a second side wall of the bed liner at a predetermined point in the side walls such that the at least two protrusions maintain the divider panel in a 90 degree angle with respect to the bottom when the divider panel is in a vertical position, the protrusions being spaced apart from one another along the horizontal axis to enable the divider panel to be positioned between them.

25. The liner of Claim 17 wherein the enclosure panel securing means comprises at least two horizontal protrusions extending outwardly from each of a first side wall and a second side wall of the bed liner at a predetermined point in the first and second side walls, the horizontal protrusions being spaced apart from one another to enable a closure channel to receive and secure the enclosure panel between the horizontal protrusions.

30. A truck bed having of the type having a bottom, a front end, a first side wall, and a second side wall, the truck bed made of materials capable of being made into formed members, the improvement comprising:

a divider panel and further comprising at least two living hinges located at predetermined locations on the divider panel, the living hinges enabling the divider panel to be raised into a vertical position at one of the at least two living hinges and horizontal position at the second of the at least two living hinges; and  
panel securing means,

whereby, the divider panel can be positioned and secured to form a trunk storage compartment with the bottom and an adjacent side wall.

49. The truck bed of Claim 44 wherein the divider securing means further comprises at least two protrusions extending outwardly from each of a first side wall and a second side wall of the bed at a predetermined point in the first and second side walls such the least two protrusions maintain the divider in a 90° angle when the divider is in a vertical position, said protrusions being spaced apart from one another along the horizontal axis such that the divider can be positioned between them.

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reexamination of the application as amended.

Election/Restriction

Applicant did in fact mean to elect Claim 53 and not claim 57, which was not pending. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's consideration in review claim 53.

Drawings

Applicant has submitted proposed corrected drawings for the examiner's review. Formal correction of the drawings will be undertaken once the examiner allows the case.

Specification

Applicant appreciates the examiner's reading of the specification and noting the errors. Applicant has made appropriate corrections. Applicant has corrected the spelling and typographical errors noted by the examiner.

Applicant submits that he has added no new material but has instead only made clarification changes. More specifically, Applicant has amended the specification to reflect that the divider is a hinged piece that is free on three sides and integrated with the bed liner on a fourth side. This is clearly shown in the drawings.

Applicant has also made several amendments to clarify the notion that when raising or rotating the panels to a "45" or "90", it is *degrees* which is being referenced.

Regarding the lower latched, they are used for extra support to strengthen the device. It is true that the living hinge keeps the divider well in place but the lower latch assists in maintaining the integrity of the device. The pressure supplied to the divider is to cause it to bow sufficiently to clear the protrusions that hold it in place. Applicant submits that these features are adequately described in the specification such that without undue need for experimentation, a person skilled in the arts would have no trouble deciphering the intent or meaning of the disclosure and the novel workings of the device.

Figures 14 and 15 were inadvertently listed on page 15. Instead figure 15 (instead of 14) and figure 16 (instead of 15) should have been listed. These two figures do relate to one another in that figure 15 depicts a top view of the particular embodiment while figure 16 depicts a side view of that same embodiment as it is being placed into a compartment position. Applicant submits that amending the specification to accurately describe the drawing with respect to the specification has added no new matter, only clarification.

Applicant respectfully requests that the examiner accepts the amendment to the specification. The amendments have added no new matter. Applicant also respectfully request that the

examiner withdraws the remaining objections to the specification as it the disclosure as now amended clearly describes Applicant's invention.

Applicant has also amended the specification to reflect the fact that the cited related case is now an issued patent.

#### Claims Objections

Applicant has amended Claims 10, 11, 24, 25, and 30 to answer each the examiner's objections: the capitalizations have been corrected and *degree* has been inserted as needed. Applicant respectfully requests that the examiner withdraw her objections.

#### Claims Rejection- 112

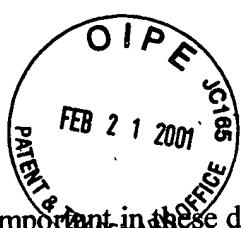
Applicant has amended claims 10, 11, 24, 25, 30, and 49 to provide proper antecedent basis and to more clearly claim his invention. Applicant has also removed references to the word "sufficient" in terms of element spacing in the claims.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the examiner, however, that living hinges is inappropriate. It is clear from both the specification and the drawings that the divider panels and enclosure panel are integrated into the bed liner; this is a key element of the invention. All other cited liners, as discussed below, have separate pieces that make up the dividers or covers. No other known art includes an integrated liner such as Applicants, which maintains the bed liner in a single unite through the use of a living hinge. Applicant further submits that the term living hinge is a known and accepted term in the molding industry. Applicant respectfully requests, therefore, that the examiner withdraws the objections as to the living hinge portion of the claims.

#### Claims Rejection-102

The examiner rejected claims 1-4, 8, 10-11, 15-17, 22, 24-25, 26, 28, 44, 49, and 50 under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by Heft Applicant respectfully disagrees. The elegance of Applicants invention is in its simplicity of manufacture and design. All cited art, including Heft, requires multiple pieces of material that are attached together by means of rods, pins, screws, etc. Heft teaches that butt style hinges (see figure 11A and Column 2, lines 5-16). Heft does not teach bed liners, let alone the possibility of producing a bed liner that has molded into it a self contained compartment unit. Like the other known art, Heft requires that a separate, multi-pieced unit be used and stored in the truck bed. Heft also requires modification of the truck bed to accepts the separate storage piece (see figures 4 and 6 which illustrate that the unit is secured to the bed itself and column 6, line 20- column 7, line9.)

The beauty of Applicant's design is that the bed is protected by a liner yet the liner is capable of forming an enclosed storage area with the need for additional members. Applicant design enables compartmentalization in a bed liner without requiring modification to a truck bed. This is



important in these days in which truck manufacturers will void a warranty if modifications are made that disrupt the original integrity of the vehicle.

Applicant respectfully requests that the examiner withdraw the 102 objections.

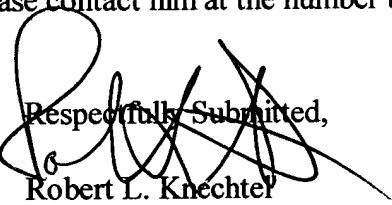
Claims Rejection- 103

The examiner rejected claims 19, 14, 23, 29, 30, and 53 under 35 USC 103as being unpatentable over Heft in view of Elston, et al. Applicant respectfully disagrees. As argued above, Heft does not teach Applicant's invention but actually demonstrates the need for Applicant's improved bed liner. Elston does nothing to change this fact. Elston again illustrates a design in which rods, pins, screws, etc. are required. Elston also teaches a multi-piece unit (see Figure 4). Most importantly, however, Elston teaches a device that must be remove if the storage dividers are not needed but instead the entire trunk is required. Applicant's design on the other hand, enables complete breakdown of the storage area without the necessity of removal or of being in the way as it is in a lowered position.

The features of Heft when combined with those of Elston do not teach a bed liner having an integrated compartment feature that permits complete storage of the dividers and compartments when not in use. Applicant respectfully requests, therefore, that the examiner withdraw the 103 objections.

Applicant respectfully submits that, as amended, the application is order for allowance and requests that the examiner take such action.

If the examiner believes a telephone conference with Applicant's attorney would be beneficial in moving this case forward, please contact him at the number below. Please note the attorney's new address and numbers.

  
Respectfully Submitted,  
Robert L. Knechtel  
Attorney for Applicant

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REPLACEMENT VERSION OF PARAGRAPHS/SECTIONS/CLAIMS SHOWING ALL CHANGES

On page 1, line 6, please amend the sentence to read as follows:

This is a Continuation-In-Part application of Parent Application Serial Number 08/870,334, filed June 6, 1997[.], now United States patent number 6,015,178, issued January 18, 2000.

On page 2, line 19, please delete the word *truck* and insert the word *compartment* as provided for in the following replacement paragraph:

There is a need, therefore, for a simple, economical means to create a covered storage compartment in a truck bed. The means should be fully integrated and not require the user to carry unnecessary pieces or use valuable storage space when the [truck] compartment is not needed.

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On page 2, lines 7-8, the examiner suggested that the description was awkward. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

The instant invention is a truck bed liner having an integrated trunk storage compartmentalization system. According to the invention, a truck bed liner of the general type having two side walls, a front wall, a bottom, and a rear wall is used. The bottom of the truck bed liner is co-formed to the front of the truck bed liner. The liner bottom is also co-formed to the liner side walls. At a predetermined location in the liner bottom is found at least one divider panel. Divider panels are formed either by molding or cutting slots [on three sides of the liner bottom] into the liner bottom creating a three-sided flap having a generally square or rectangular appearance. The fourth side is molded or cut into a living hinge. The living hinge allows the unattached portion of the truck bed liner bottom to move freely about the living hinge. The side walls of the truck bed liner include receiving channels into which the divider panels are locked into place.

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On page 2, lines 18 and 20 the examiner suggested that the description was awkward. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

In operation, an operator can position the divider panel to a 90 degree position with respect to the bottom and lock it into the receiving channels found on the side walls. The enclosure panel is then rotated 90 degree with respect to the tail gate when in a closed position such that the enclosure panel may be inserted into the closure channel to form, in conjunction with the divider panel, a trunk storage compartmentalization. When the enclosed trunk storage compartmentalization is no longer needed, the enclosure and divider panels can be detached from the side wall channels and returned and locked into the original, flat horizontal position.

On page 4, line 8, the examiner suggested that the description was awkward. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

In another embodiment, the divider is located in the bottom of the bed liner perpendicular to the front wall and the enclosure panel is located in the side wall of the bed liner.

On page 4, line 13, the examiner suggested that the spelling of Side wall should be changed. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

In another embodiment, a single section of the liner bottom having two living hinges is used, thereby, enabling the formation of a trunk storage compartment with the [Side] side wall by creating a vertical wall with one of the living hinges and a horizontal cover with the second living hinge.

The examiner suggested that *Truck Bed Liner* should not be capitalized in the application. Please insert the following replacement paragraphs throughout the application:

Page 1, line 7:

This invention relates to [Truck Bed Liners] truck bed liners and, more particularly, to a [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liners having a storage compartment within the truck bed.

Page 5, starting at line 2 ; also on line 5, the examiner suggested changing *having* to *have*, that the sentence starting on line 4 was awkward, line 9 *degree* should be inserted, and on line 11, *Side wall* should be *side wall* :

It is a primary object of the present invention to create a [Truck Bed Liners] truck bed liners that has an integrated trunk storage compartmentalization feature. The truck bed liner has generally a front wall, two side walls, a bottom, and a back wall. A divider panel and an enclosure panel are each molded or cut into the truck bed liner [on three sides and having a living hinge on its fourth side] such that the divider panel and enclosure panel can be secured to the side walls and, thereby, in combination, form a trunk storage compartment.

It is another object of the present invention to create a [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liner that has a locking means to hold the divider panel in place when positioned at 90 degrees from the horizontal.

It is still another object of the present invention to create a [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liner that has a [Side] side wall with a closure channel to releasably retain the enclosure panel to secure and enclose the storage of items within a trunk storage compartment.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide a [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liner in which the trunk storage compartment is easy to assemble and disassemble. A related object of the present invention is to provide a trunk storage compartment that is formed from an integrated unit within the [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liner.

Page 6, line 1:

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liner with an integrated trunk storage compartmentalization feature which is economical to manufacture and produce.

Page 6, line 11; the examiner also noted that the word *degree* should be inserted:

**Figure 2** depicts the divider panel locked into position at 90 degrees from horizontal and the enclosure panel rotated to 90 degrees from horizontal prior to forming the trunk storage compartmentalization within the [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liner.

Page 7, line 7:

**Figure 9** depicts an alternate embodiment of the inventive device in its assembled configuration illustrated as located in the forward section of the [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liner.

Page 7, line 12:

**Figure 11** depicts a top view of the alternate embodiment in which the liner bottom is used in conjunction with multiple living hinges to form the trunk storage compartment in the forward section of the [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liner.

Page 9, line 2:

The description of the preferred embodiment is directed to pickup [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liner. It should be understood, however, that the principles of the inventive device can just as easily be adapted to liners for use in sport utility vehicles, station wagons, passenger motor vehicle trunks, and the like. It also should be understood that the principles of the inventive device can just as easily be adapted for use directly in truck beds made of composite materials, thereby eliminating the need for a liner.

Page 17, line 9:

The principles of the inventive device and the alternate embodiments disclosed above are directed to application with a [Truck Bed Liner] truck bed liner having a front, back, side walls, and bottom. The principles and alternate embodiments may also be applied to liners possessing only partial bed liner characteristics. For example, a liner comprising only a bed mat to protect the bottom of a bed may be fitted with an integrated divider panel and a separate or co-joined member that enables formation of a cover member in the formation of an enclosure panel.

On Page 6, line 15, the examiner also noted that the word *degree* should be inserted:

**Figure 3** shows a fractionalized view of a divider panel in a 90 degree raised position illustrating the locking mechanism.

On page 13, lines 2-3, the examiner noted that the word *horizontal* was used when *vertical* would be more appropriate. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

In operation, to create the truck storage compartmentalization, divider panel 56 is rotated from the horizontal position to an essentially vertical position and locked into vertical divider lock means 58, as discussed above in Figure 3. Enclosure panel 70 is removed from base panel 72 by applying sufficient pressure on enclosure panel 70 in a direction away from base panel 72 to release enclosure panel 70 from base panel 72. Upon release, enclosure panel 70 rotates away from base panel 72 along living hinge 74. Base panel 72 is then rotated from the vertical position to an essentially horizontal position through lifting and closing of tail gate 30. During the lifting and closing of tail gate 30 to a closed vertical position, enclosure panel 70 is received into closure means 75 by sliding edge 80 of enclosure panel 72 being inserted between horizontal protrusions 76 into closure channel 78. Upon tail gate 30 reaching the closed vertical position, enclosure panel 72 is completely inserted into closure channel 78 such that sliding edge 80 is essentially flush with divider panel 56 and enclosure panel 70 is approximately perpendicular to divider panel 56.

On page 13, lines 11-12, the examiner noted that *base channel* should be *base panel*. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

The resulting trunk storage compartment is illustrated in Figure 8 in which the items within the compartment are prevented from unrestricted movement by divider panel 56 and base [channel] panel 72 co-acting as the sides of the compartment and enclosure panel 70 acting as the top of the compartment to protect the items from inclement weather, such as rain. The same inventive concept may be used to form the trunk storage compartment in the forward section of liner 20 as illustrated in Figure 9.

On page 14, lines 3-4, the examiner noted that *at the opposite end of liner bottom 40* was unclear and that a figure element was incorrectly numbered. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

Turning to Figure 10, it is contemplated that liner front wall 34 and the liner bottom 40 may be used to create a trunk storage compartmentalization within the truck bed liner 20. Liner bottom 40 is provided with divider panel 56 at a predetermined location from liner front wall 34 at living hinge 52. Divider panel 56 extends from liner front wall 34 to living hinge 52. Liner side walls 36, 38 are correspondingly provided with divider vertical lock means 58. Liner front wall 34 is provided with a front wall enclosure panel 84. Liner front wall 34 is molded or cut so as to not co-form on its three sides to liner bottom 40 or liner side walls 36, 38; but instead, is provided, on its fourth side, with a living hinge 82 attached to the liner 20 [at the opposite end of liner bottom 40]. Divider panel 56 may be rotated, along living hinge 52, in a direction through rotation A to a 90° with respect to the horizontal and liner bottom 40 and locked in a vertical position to liner side walls 36, 38 by divider vertical lock means 58. Front wall enclosure panel 84 may be rotated in a direction through rotation B, along the living hinge 82, from a vertical position to a horizontal position and secured to a front wall latch means [84] 85 protruding from liner side walls 36, 38 adjacent to divider vertical lock means 58. Alternatively, front wall enclosure panel 84 and divider panel 56 may be secured using a single latch means. In this manner, liner front wall 34 acts as the enclosure panel and divider panel 56 and liner 20 coact as the sides to form the trunk storage compartment. Preferably, front wall enclosure panel 84 is approximately equal in length to divider panel 56. Alternatively, the length of front wall enclosure panel 84 and position of living hinge 82 may be greater or smaller, if desired, as long as the length of divider panel 56 and position of living hinge 52 are correspondingly made greater or smaller.

On page 15, the examiner noted in lines 10 and 12 that the word *degree* was missing. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

Turning to Figure 12, to form the trunk storage compartment, enclosure panel 92 of liner bottom 40 is raised to a 90 position with respect to the horizontal. Enclosure panel 92 is situated at an angle 94 with respect to divider panel 56. Angle 94 is approximately 45 degree with respect to divider panel 56. The rotation of enclosure panel 92 about divider panel 56 is accomplished by second living hinge 88. Divider panel 56 is correspondingly raised to a 45 degree position with respect to the horizontal which is accomplished by first living hinge 86. Front wall 34 is affixed with a latch means 96. The formation of the trunk storage compartment is completed, as illustrated in Figure 13, by rotating divider panel 56, along living hinge 86, to a 90 position with respect to the horizontal and liner bottom 40.

The examiner noted that there was an inconsistency between Figures 14 and 15. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

Alternatively, in another embodiment as illustrated in Figure [14] 15, the trunk storage compartment is formed in conjunction with liner Side wall 36 or liner Side wall 38. This alternate embodiment may be accomplished, as illustrated in Figure 16, through liner bottom 40 having living hinges 86 and 88 to create divider panel 56 and enclosure panel 92. Divider panel 56 and enclosure panel 92 may be rotated, as illustrated in Figure 16, along living hinges 86 and 88 and secured by latch means 96 to form the trunk storage compartment with liner Side wall 36 or liner Side wall 38.

On page 18, line 5, the examiner noted a typographical error. Please insert the following replacement paragraph:

Thus, there has been provided a truck bed liner with integrated panels to create a trunk storage compartment within a truck bed liner. While the invention has been described in conjunction with a specific embodiment, it is evident that many alternatives, modifications and variations will be apparent to those skilled in the art in light of the foregoing description. Accordingly, it [in] is intended to embrace all such alternatives, modifications and variations as fall within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

10. The storage compartment of Claim 2 wherein the divider panel securing means comprises at least two protrusions extending outwardly from each [Side wall] of a first side wall and a second side wall of the bed liner at a predetermined point in the first and second side walls such that [they] the at least two protrusions maintain the divider panel in a 90 degree angle with respect to the bottom when the divider panel is in a [raised] vertical position, the protrusions

being spaced apart from one another along the horizontal axis [a sufficient distance] such that the divider panel can be positioned between them.

11. The liner of Claim 3 wherein the enclosure panel securing means comprises at least two horizontal protrusions extending outwardly from each of [the two side walls] of a first side wall and a second side wall of the bed liner at a predetermined point in the [Side wall] first and second side walls, the horizontal protrusions being spaced apart from one another [a sufficient distance] to form a closure channel to receive and secure the enclosure panel between the horizontal protrusions.

24. The storage compartment of Claim 16 wherein the divider panel securing means comprises at least two protrusions extending outwardly from each [Side wall] of a first side wall and a second side wall of the bed liner at a predetermined point in the side walls such that [they] the at least two protrusions maintain the divider panel in a 90 degree angle with respect to the bottom when the divider panel is in a [raised] vertical position, the protrusions being spaced apart from one another along the horizontal axis [a sufficient distance] to enable the divider panel to be positioned between them.

25. The liner of Claim 17 wherein the enclosure panel securing means comprises at least two horizontal protrusions extending outwardly from each [of the two side walls] of a first side wall and a second side wall of the bed liner at a predetermined point in the first and second side [wall] walls, the horizontal protrusions being spaced apart from one another [a sufficient distance] to enable a closure channel to receive and secure the enclosure panel between the horizontal protrusions.

30. A truck bed having of the type having a bottom, a front end, a first side wall, and a second side wall, the truck bed made of materials capable [having] of being made into formed members, the improvement comprising:

a divider panel and further comprising at least two living hinges located at predetermined locations on the divider panel, the living hinges enabling the divider panel to be raised into a vertical position at one of the at least two living hinges and horizontal position at the second of the at least two living hinges; and  
panel securing means,

whereby, the divider panel can be positioned and secured to form a trunk storage compartment with the bottom and an adjacent side wall.



49. The truck bed of Claim 44 wherein the divider securing means further comprises at least two protrusions extending outwardly from each [side wall] of a first side wall and a second side wall of the bed at a predetermined point in the first and second side walls such [they] the least two protrusions maintain the divider in a 90° angle when the divider is in a [raised] vertical position, said protrusions being spaced apart from one another along the horizontal axis [a sufficient distance] such that the divider can be positioned between them.